

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SP-02 L-01

PM-03 INR-05 INRE-00 CIAE-00 SAJ-01 ACDA-10 NSC-05

IO-03 PRS-01 /054 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3899

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE

USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN

CINCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 2606

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR GR TU

SUBJ: ALLEGED NEW TURKISH "PROVOCATIONS" OVER GREEK ISLANDS
(SECOND MESSAGE TODAY)

REF ATHENS 2603

MIL ADDEES ALSO FOR POLAD

1. DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF CALLED ME AGAIN A LITTLE AFTER
6 PM LOCAL TIME TODAY TO SAY THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT HAD
DECIDED NOT REPEAT NOT TO PRESENT A NOTE TO THE GOT IN ANKARA
TODAY CONCERNING THE NEW ALLEGED UNAUTHORIZED TURKISH
OVERFLIGHTS OF GREEK ISLANDS IN THE EASTERN AEGEAN. AVEROFF
SAID IT HAD BEEN DECIDED TO CHECK EACH AND EVERY DETAIL OF
THE UNAUTHORIZED OVERFLIGHTS BEFORE PRESENTING ANOTHER PROTEST
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TO THE GOT. HE SAID THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WANTED TO BE

ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN OF ITS FACTS SO THAT TURKEY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO DISMISS THE GREEK CHARGES, OR CHARACTERIZE THE GREEK CHARGES, AS "PROVOCATIVE," BECAUSE OF SOME SMALL FACTUAL ERROR IN THE GREEK ALLEGATIONS.

2. I TOLD AVEROFF THAT I HAD ALREADY CONVEYED TO APPROPRIATE U.S. AUTHORITIES THE SUBSTANCE OF HIS OTHER CONVERSATION WITH ME EARLIER THIS AFTERNOON AND THAT I WOULD NOW DO THE SAME WITH THIS NEW INFORMATION.

3. COMMENT: PERHAPS WHAT AVEROFF TOLD ME JUST NOW IS AN ACCURATE ACCOUNT OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT'S POSITION AND DECISIONS BEING MADE. HOWEVER, I AM NOT CONVINCED THAT WE SHOULD TAKE IT AT FACE VALUE. ONE OTHER POSSIBILITY IS THAT PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS HAS OVER-RULED THE POSITION OF AVEROFF AND THE GREEK SERVICE CHIEFS THIS AFTERNOON, OR THAT GREEK AUTHORITIES HAVE HAD SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT INCREASING THE ALREADY SERIOUS TENSIONS IN GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS. ALSO, FURTHER INFORMATION MAY HAVE BECOME AVAILABLE TO THEM DURING THE AFTERNOON TO MAKE AVEROFF QUESTION THE ACCURACY OF EARLIER REPORTS. IN ANY CASE, HOWEVER, THE POTENTIAL REMAINS FOR A SERIOUS AND RAPID ESCALATION OF INCIDENTS IN THE AEGEAN THAT COULD RESULT IN SOME DEGREE OF HOSTILITIES BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY; AND I WISH TO RESTATE MY EARLIER RECOMMENDATION (REFTEL) THAT PROMPT CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO SOME APPROPRIATE WAY OF TAKING THIS UP ALSO WITH TURKISH AUTHORITIES.

KUBISCH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY AIRCRAFT, AIR COMBAT OPERATIONS, AIRSPACE VIOLATIONS, AGEAN SEA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ATHENS02606
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750115-0673
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750487/aaaadbcr.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 ATHENS 2603
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <08 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ALLEGED NEW TURKISH "PROVOCATIONS" OVER GREEK ISLANDS (SECOND MESSAGE TODAY)
TAGS: PFOR, GR, TU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006